

SEP 28 2016

Mr. David Conroy  
United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 1  
EPA New England  
5 Post Office Square, Suite 100  
Boston, MA 02109-3912

**Re: Initial Notification of Potential Exceptional Event for Ozone on May 25-29, 2016**

Dear Mr. Conroy:

The State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) observed an ozone episode from the period of May 25<sup>th</sup> through May 29<sup>th</sup> that appears to have been significantly influenced by the Fort McMurray wildfire and has flagged all ozone data in EPA's Air Quality System (AQS) as having been influenced by this fire.

Factors that lead us to conclude that the Fort McMurray wildfire influenced the flagged data are:

- Weather patterns were initially not favorable for ozone formation over Connecticut. High pressure trapped pollutants from the wildfire over the upper Great Lakes for several days before normally clean northwest winds transported 'unhealthy' levels of ozone to the east and southeast across New York State and then to Connecticut;
- Visible satellite plumes and back trajectory analysis before the event showed wildfire smoke transport southeast into the Midwestern States before arriving over Connecticut on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016; and
- The NOAA operational ozone forecast model under-predicted ozone by more than 20 ppb during the period. The under prediction is likely due to the inability of the model to account for the effect of real-time gas-phase smoke emissions from the fire.

In accordance with 40 CFR 50.14(c)(2) of the recently revised 'Exceptional Events Rule', discussions between our offices are required to assess whether the data collected during the event will affect a regulatory determination and to determine the scope of any necessary exceptional events technical demonstration. Please contact Mr. Richard Pirolli at (860) 424-3450 to arrange these discussions.

Sincerely,



Anne R. Gobin  
Bureau Chief  
Bureau of Air Management

ARG:RAP/mag  
cc: Richard Pirolli, CT DEEP  
Bob Judge, EPA R1